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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE PATH

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XXXVI—No. 10 **August, 1948**

IF the action of one reacts on the lives of all, and this is the true scientific idea, then it is only by all men becoming brothers and all women sisters, and by all practising in their daily lives true brotherhood and true sisterhood, that the real human solidarity, which lies at the root of the elevation of the race, can ever be attained. It is this action and interaction, this true brotherhood and sisterhood, in which each shall live for all and all for each, which is one of the fundamental Theosophical principles that every Theosophist should be bound, not only to teach, but to carry out in his or her individual life. —H.P.B.

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TRUST is the best of relationships.—*Dhammapada*

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XXXVI August, 1948 No. 10

"DIFFICULT HOPE"

HARDLY less recondite than the metaphysics of Theosophy itself are the mysteries of "theosophical" human nature. The catalytic effect of theosophic study is plainly stated by the Teacher, H. P. Blavatsky, and copiously illustrated in the history of the present theosophical movement, yet realization of it for the individual student is slow. The doctrines of Theosophy, and the multiple phases of their psychological impact upon the human being, occasion a perplexity which is both natural and induced. Why *induced* perplexity? Because, in the pursuit of theosophical knowledge, perplexity serves a definite purpose. As one student has explained, "the traditional methods of teaching, generally followed, aim at impressing every fresh idea on the memory by provoking the perplexity it at last relieves."

Mme. Blavatsky, the messenger of Theosophy, made no attempt to simplify the doctrines until they were indistinguishable from ordinary notions on the nature of man and the universe. By her own statement, she never hoped to "succeed in making Theosophy intelligible without mental effort on the part of the reader," and she readily admitted that some obscurity of thought was unavoidable. Her writings abound with points of perplexity, odd details, and unmanageable information. Fortunate the reader who has faith in her "hope" that the obscurity "is due to depth and not to confusion." The mind that assimilates and extends the general ideas provided, that sets about linking every odd fact with a comprehensive principle, and that conscientiously pursues a line of thought until a philosophical impasse is reached—comes upon hidden hints.

What applies to the manner of presenting the philosophy itself applies equally to the concourse of events that make up the history of the present theosophical movement: the literature and the "accompanying demonstrations" are the two halves of the whole message of Theosophy. While Theosophy was being recorded in articles and books, so far as the language of ideas was concerned, another language was being addressed to the consciousness of the student—the language of events. The first without the second is only intellectual teaching; the second without the first, a strange and unaccountable chapter of human history; together, they become practical philosophy.

The active officers of the Theosophical Society, H.P.B.'s associates in the publishing and literary work, her helpers, and the members of her household—all had the task of learning how to conduct organizational and ordinary matters in a unique way, that is, in the theosophical way. The several crises in the T.S., both public and private, had more than one karmic function, and by no means belonged exclusively to the individuals who, at the time, were most directly concerned. The annals of the Society, in a bare twenty-one years, ran the gamut of "theosophical" character roles, and in dramatic series an invaluable set of psychological revelations were presented.

The American flair for advertising and "tall tales," combined with Yankee ingenuity in "getting things going"; the Britisher's overpowering sense of empire, and "the English character, difficult to reach, but solid and tenacious when once aroused"; the fatal passivity of many Indians, linked with the subtle intellectuality of a people as addicted to metaphysics as Western nations are to dreams of conquest: these and many other "national" characteristics were blended in the Society. The Theosophical Movement had to reckon with all varieties of human nature, political and personal. No two individuals have the same response to Theosophy, but it is a matter of history that every refinement of good and bad faith—of impartiality and superstition, of integrity and conscientiousness, as well as repudiation and pious horror—has been represented, at one time or another, in the theosophical ranks. The prototypes exist, for the study and profit of the present-day student.

It should not be supposed that the instructiveness of the course of events in the theosophical world was left to chance. Whenever there were those, within or outside the theosophical arena, who were honestly confused by the turn of affairs, the philosophy of the circumstance or experience was unobtrusively supplied in one of the theosophical magazines, in *The Theosophist,* H.P.B.'s *Lucifer,* or Wm. Q. Judge's *Path.* Theosophical events were regarded as historical analogies for the doctrines of Theosophy, and were dealt with in an occult counterpoint. Far from "explaining everything," the discussion of the forces at work in this or that situation often raised questions "undreamed of," intimating that the real mystery had not yet dawned upon the observers. Not until the intellectual faculty is stimulated to look for *what it does not know,* not until the personal man is sensible of an attraction toward the higher mind, where thought, will and feeling operate in unison—can any real teaching or learning of Theosophy begin.

An examination of H. P. Blavatsky's writings, in chronological sequence, shows that the philosophy of Theosophy was actually set down *in answer to questions.* Not alone *The Secret Doctrine,* but the whole of H.P.B.'s literary effort, was dedicated "to all True Theosophists, in every Country, and of every Race, for they called it forth, and for them it was recorded." Well versed in the law of cycles, H.P.B. responded to needs, instead of pronouncing revelations for which no demand, or nothing but an artificial demand, existed. As with the "intellectual" phase of the teaching, so also with the "psychological" instruction. *The Key to Theosophy,* and Mme. Blavatsky's *Lucifer* articles, in which the occult science of psychology is outlined, belong to her last three years as visible Teacher, when the study of Theosophy became, for a sizable minority of T.S. members, a serious vocation.

Having passed beyond the stage of mere intellectual affiliation, a few theosophists, of their own will, declared a moral alliance with Theosophic truth, and began to enact, on inner planes, their own *Bhagavad-Gita*—the battles of Arjuna. For those who did not relinquish this war in the initial skirmishes, who asked not how to escape from trials, but how to learn from them, there came the straight answer of the warrior soul: H.P.B., the "lion-hearted," brought to light the hidden things of darkness in the nether man,

and affirmed the hidden radiance each one could envision in the Higher Self. What was called forth by students of courage and discrimination, in the last and momentous years before H. P. Blavatsky's withdrawal from the visible scene of the Movement, will be found in *Lucifer, The Key to Theosophy,* and *The Voice of the Silence,* directed to the *Manas,* the *Buddhi,* and the silent Witness of the true theosophist.

How many profited by the opportunity of a straight look at Theosophy, and at themselves in its light, cannot be known by present-day students, but, undeniably, there were those who saw, through H.P.B.'s eyes, the theosophist's dilemma.

The dilemma of the theosophist is that of any man who undertakes to compare philosophically what is and what might be *in himself.* A British essayist recently observed that "Americans are extraordinarily quick to reject a man's valuation of himself and sense his inner misgivings. Perhaps it is a protective sense which helps them thread their way through the national circus of superficial cordiality and the blatant marketing of 'personality'." This is the origin of the mania for "debunking," and, whether public or private characters are sacrificed, the effects *on the debunker* and on all who uphold his verdict are morally disastrous—as the mediocrity of much modern American "achievement" clearly shows.

Among those engaged in the discipline of Theosophic study, the principle applies more stringently. By "suspicion and inharmony . . . the psychic atmosphere, so to say, is thrown into confusion, and the reaction, even upon the stauncher students, is very harmful," to quote H. P. Blavatsky's words. Where this mood prevails, there is not the capacity for "acquiring knowledge by the exercise of the spiritual faculty." Such persons, H.P.B. states, "are slow, if not wholly incapable of grasping the ultimate truths behind the phenomena of existence," since "occult truth cannot be absorbed by a mind that is filled with preconception, prejudice, and suspicion."

In the theosophical literature, it is an open secret that all who would make Theosophy first in their lives must have unbounded confidence in their own power to learn and in the Teacher's power to teach, else their resolve will be no match for the perplexities, confusion of loyalties, and despair which their intellectual or psychic nature will inevitably encounter. The "stauncher students"

have sufficient grounding in the philosophy to sustain them in the calming certainty that every event, projected or precipitated, is a challenge of their knowledge of karma. They move forward in the mood one writer has expressed as that of "difficult hope." It *is* difficult to hope in the face of human nature: "Every man," Emerson said, "beholds his human condition with a degree of melancholy," and how much more melancholy seems the human condition outside the man himself! The dual potentialities of the psychic mind must always dismay one who does not know in himself and understand by principle the actual scope of free will and of moral self-determination. Without hope—no matter how "difficult"—it would be impossible to press on with the unfamiliar science of individual responsibility and perfectibility.

One talisman for the journey, addressed long ago to a solitary traveler, is: "Keep your own counsel, and believe in your better intuitions." The complement of this may also be given: "A man's character, his true inner nature, can never be thoroughly drawn out if he believes himself watched, or strives for an object." These statements are a key to the theosophist's dilemma, and to much that is mysterious in theosophical history. The strongest case is that of H. P. Blavatsky herself. Interested observers of the difficulties, disappointments and "failures" attending her work were frequently puzzled to explain why those whom she termed the real Founders of the Theosophical Society, the Masters of Wisdom, did not forewarn, intercede, protect or "save" her from this or that trial.

When trusted co-workers turned against H.P.B. and the T.S., slandering Theosophy to the degree they had once honored it, and denouncing its Teacher in the measure of their former adulation, the question came: Could not H. P. Blavatsky have known at least the possibility of, or been prepared for, such a betrayal? Would not much misunderstanding of Theosophy and the T.S. have been avoided if unstable members had been relegated to minor posts?

When it was learned that H.P.B. had known, in some cases, the dangers and misfortunes that certain members were almost sure to bring upon the T.S., and could have known, in all cases, what the future held in store, the situation became more inexplicable than ever—except to those who could recognize the "lion heart." H.P.B. knew, and shared the knowledge with all who would hear,

that no one who believes himself "watched" will develop initiative and the wisdom of self-reliance. H.P.B. taught and acted upon the principle that no one could afford to "strive for an object"—even for the "rewards of virtue"—without bringing upon himself a concentration of personal karma that would entirely nonplus his work for Theosophy.

The life and work of H. P. Blavatsky are evidence that he who holds to the better intuitions and keeps his own counsel about lesser intimations, will gain the power of devotion to Theosophy, wherever it may be found. Finding "theosophy" in his fellow-man, he will be encouraged in the "difficult hope" for the brotherhood of all mankind in knowledge.

Good Men and Agents

You want to know the inner situation of the T.S. Well, it is just this: we have all worked along for eighteen years, and the T.S. as a body has its karma as well as each one in it. Those in it who have worked hard, of course, have their own karma, and have brought themselves to a point ahead of the T.S. Now, if the branches are weak in their knowledge of Theosophy, and in their practise of its precepts and their understanding of the whole thing, the body is in the situation of the child who has been growing too fast for its strength; if that be the case it is bound to have a check. For my part I do not want any great rush, since I too well know how weak even those long in it are. . . .

Attempts will be silently made to arouse irritation, and to increase it where it now exists. So the only thing to do is to live as much as possible in the higher nature, and each one to crush out the small and trifling ebullitions of the lower nature which ordinarily are overlooked; thus strength is gained in the whole nature, and the efforts of the enemy made nil. This is of the highest importance, and if not attended to it will be sad. This is what I had in view in all the letters I have sent to you and others. I hope you will be able to catch hold of men, here and there, who will take the right, true, solid view, and thus be left behind you as good men and good agents. —WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

"THEOSOPHIST" EDITORIAL NOTES

VII: Spirit and Matter

[The concepts of matter, force, and spirit focus the divergent teachings of physics, spiritualism, religion and Theosophy on the basic question, What is real? The answer of one physicist, Einstein, was turned to the construction of the atomic bomb; the answer of some spiritualists established hypnotism as a legitimate psychic tool, and, incidentally, as a parlor pastime; the religious view of reality has effectively laid the foundations for mass inertia and the totalitarian "solution" of political and social difficulties. Answers to the question of what really exists, what is the permanent essence in man and nature, are therefore of practical influence in the affairs of mankind, and if the teachings of Theosophy, when recorded in the last century, took extended notice of the various contemporary definitions of spirit, force, and matter—the reason has since become all too plain. A representative passage in *Isis Unveiled* (I, 55-64) indicates the universal application of the principle that every force in nature is an effect of will, proceeding from intelligence (I, 285). In the following extracts from *The Theosophist,* the discussion opened up by "What is Matter and What is Force" (Nos. V and VI of the present series) is carried into the realm of mind—individual and universal.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

REJECTING all *Externals* as true guides, they [Theosophists] accept but the *Internal,* the invisible, the never to be described by any adjective or human qualification. And going deeper they reject the idea of "the soul of the soul"—*anima;* from which the word *animal* is derived. For us there is no *over-soul* or under-soul; but only ONE—*substance:* the last word being used in the sense Spinoza attaches to it; calling it the ONE *Existence,* we cannot limit its significance and dwarf it to the qualification "over"; but we apply it to the universal, ubiquitous Presence, rejecting the word "Being," and replacing it with "*All*-Being." Our Deity as the "God" of Spinoza and of the true Adwaitee—neither *thinks,* nor *creates,* for it is *All-thought* and *All-creation.* We say with Spinoza —who repeated in another key but what the Esoteric doctrine of the Upanishads teaches: 'Extension is visible Thought; Thought is invisible Extension.' For Theosophists of our school the Deity is a

UNITY in which all other units in their infinite variety merge and from which they are indistinguishable—except in the prism of theistic *Maya*. The individual drops of the curling waves of the universal Ocean have no independent existence. In short, while the Theist proclaims his God a gigantic universal BEING, the Theosophist declares with Heraclitus, as quoted by a modern author, that the ONE Absolute is not Being—but *becoming:* the ever-developing, cyclic evolution, the Perpetual Motion of Nature visible and invisible—moving and breathing even during its long Pralayic Sleep.

(December, 1883)

The Eastern Occultists hold that there is but one element in the universe—infinite, uncreated and indestructible—MATTER; which element manifests itself in seven states—four of which are now known to modern science, and which include the state of *Radiant matter* discovered by Mr. Crookes, and that three are to be yet discovered in the West. *Spirit* is the highest state of that matter, they say, since that which is neither matter nor any of its attributes is—NOTHING. We would recommend in reference to this question the perusal of an article headed "What is Matter and what is Force?" in the September No. of the *Theosophist,* 1882.

(July, 1883)

In one sense, every Buddhist as well as every Occultist, and even most of the educated Spiritualists, are, strictly speaking, Materialists. The whole question lies in the ultimate and scientific decision upon the nature or essence of FORCE. Shall we say that Force is —Spirit, or that Spirit is—a force? Is the latter physical or spiritual, *Matter* or SPIRIT? If the latter is something—it must *be* material, otherwise it is but a pure abstraction, a *no*-thing. Nothing which is capable of producing an effect on any portion of the physical—objective or subjective—Kosmos can be otherwise than material. Mind—whose enormous potentiality is being discovered more and more with every day—could produce *no* effect were it not material; and believers in a personal God, have themselves either to admit that the deity in doing its work has to use material force to produce a physical effect, or—to advocate a miracle, which is an absurdity. As A. J. Manley, of Minnesota, very truly observes in a letter:—

"It has ever been an impossibility with me to realize or comprehend an effect, which requires motion or force, as being produced by 'nothing.' The leaves of the forest are stirred by the gentlest breeze, and yet withhold the breeze, and the leaves cease to move. While gas continues to escape from the tube, apply the match and you will have a brilliant light; cut off the supply and the wonderful phenomenon ceases. Place a magnet near a compass, and the needle is attracted by it; remove the former and the needle will resume its normal condition. * * *

"I have observed in all physical phenomena, that when the propelling force is withdrawn, the phenomena invariably cease. From these facts, I infer that the producing causes must be material, though we do not see them. Again, if these phenomena were produced by 'nothing,' it would be impossible to withdraw the producing force, and the manifestations would never cease. Indeed, if such manifestations ever existed, they must of necessity be perpetual."

Concurring fully with the above reasoning, it thus becomes of the utmost necessity for us, under the penalty of being constantly accused of inconsistency, if not of flat contradictions, to make a well-marked difference between those *materialists* who, believing that nothing can exist outside of matter in however sublimated a state, yet believe in various subjective forces unknown to, only because as yet undiscovered by, science; rank sceptics; and those *transcendentalists* who, mocking at the majesty of truth and fact, fly into the face of logic by saying that "nothing is impossible to God"; that he is an extra-cosmic deity who created the universe out of nothing, was never subject to law, and can produce a *miracle* outside of all physical law whenever it pleases him, &c.

(February, 1883)

The Tibetan esoteric Buddhist doctrine teaches that *Prakriti* is cosmic matter, out of which all visible forms are produced; and *Akasa* that same cosmic matter, but still more imponderable—its spirit, as it were—"*Prakriti*" being the body or *substance,* and "Akasa-Sakti" its soul energy.

Or, in other words, "*Prakriti,*" Swabhavat or *Akasa* is—SPACE as the Tibetans have it; Space filled with whatsoever substance or

no substance at all; *i.e.*, with substance so imponderable as to be only metaphysically conceivable. *Brahmam,* then, would be the germ thrown into the soil of that field, and *Sakti,* that mysterious energy or force which develops it, and which is called by the Buddhist Arahats of Tibet—FO-HAT. "That which we call form (rupa) is not different from that which we call space (Sunyata). . . . Space is not different from Form. Form is the same as Space; Space is the same as Form. And so with the other skandhas, whether vedana, or sanjua, or sanskara or vijnava, they are each the same as their opposite". . . . (Book of *Sin-king* or the "Heart Sutra." Chinese translation of the "Maha-Prajna-Paramita-Hridaya-Sutra." Chapter on the "Avalokiteshwara," or the *manifested Buddha.*) So that the Aryan and Tibetan or Arhat doctrines agree perfectly in substance, differing but in names given and the way of putting it—a distinction resulting from the fact that the Vedantin Brahmans believe in Parabrahmam, a *deific* power, impersonal though it may be, while the Buddhists entirely reject it. (January, 1882)

We have already pointed out that, in our opinion, the whole difference between Buddhistic and Vedantic philosophies was that the former was a kind of *Rationalistic* Vedantism, while the latter might be regarded as a *transcendental* Buddhism. If the Aryan esotericism applies the term *jivatma* to the seventh principle, the pure and *per se* unconscious spirit, it is because the Vedanta, postulating three kinds of existence—(1) the *paramarthika (the true, the only real one),* (2) the *vyavaharika* (the practical), and (3) the *pratibhasika* (the apparent or illusory life)—makes the first *life* or *jiva,* the only true existent one. Brahma or the ONE'S SELF is its only representative in the universe, as it is the *universal Life in toto,* while the other two are but its "phenomenal appearances," imagined and created by ignorance, and complete illusions suggested to us by our blind senses.

The Buddhists, on the other hand, deny either subjective or objective reality even to that one Self-Existence. Buddha declares that there is neither Creator nor an ABSOLUTE Being. Buddhist rationalism was ever too alive to the insuperable difficulty of admitting one absolute consciousness, as in the words of Flint—"wherever there is consciousness there is relation, and wherever there is rela-

tion there is dualism." The ONE LIFE is either "MUKTA" (absolute and unconditioned) and can have no relation to anything nor to any one; or it is "BADDHA" (bound and conditioned), and then it cannot be called the ABSOLUTE; the limitation, moreover, necessitating another deity as powerful as the first to account for all the evil in this world. Hence, the Arahat secret doctrine on cosmogony admits but of one absolute, indestructible, eternal, and uncreated UNCONSCIOUSNESS (so to translate), of an element (the word being used for want of a better term) absolutely independent of everything else in the universe; a something ever present or ubiquitous, a Presence which ever was, is, and will be, whether there is a God, gods or none; whether there is a universe, or no universe; existing during the eternal cycles of Maha Yugs, during the *Pralayas* as during the periods of *Manvantara:* and this is SPACE, the field for the operation of the eternal Forces and natural Law, the *basis* (as our correspondent rightly calls it) upon which take place the eternal intercorrelations of Akasa-Prakriti, guided by the unconscious regular pulsations of *Sakti*—the breath or power of a conscious deity, the theists would say—the eternal energy of an eternal, unconscious Law, say the Buddhists. Space, then, or "Fan, Bar-nang" (Maha Sunyata) or, as it is called by Lao-tze, the "Emptiness" is the nature of the Buddhist Absolute. (See Confucius' *Praise of the Abyss.*) The word *jiva,* then, could never be applied by the Arahats to the *Seventh* Principle, since it is only through its correlation or contact with matter that *Fo-hat* (the Buddhist active energy) can develop active *conscious* life; and that to the question "how can *Unconsciousness* generate *consciousness?*" the answer would be: "Was the seed which generated a Bacon or a Newton self-conscious?"

To our European readers: Deceived by the phonetic similarity, it must not be thought that the name "Brahman" is identical in this connection with Brahma or *Iswara*—the personal God. The *Upanishads*—the Vedanta Scriptures—mention no such God and one would vainly seek in them any allusions to a conscious deity. The Brahmam, or Parabrahm, the ABSOLUTE of the Vedantins, is neuter and unconscious, and has no connection with the masculine Brahma of the Hindu Triad, or *Trimurti.* Some Orientalists rightly believe the name derived from the verb "Brih," to *grow* or *increase,*

and to be, in this sense, the *universal expansive force of nature,* the vivifying and spiritual principle, or power, spread throughout the universe and which in its collectivity is the one Absoluteness, the one Life and the only Reality. (January, 1882)

[*An article by Eliphas Lévi contained the statement, "The divine sun gets never old, and the soul of the just is made in the image and likeness of* THAT *sun"—and to this statement was attached the following note.*—Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

The "central sun" whence emanates and whither returns *intelligence* scattered throughout the universe. It is the one eternal universal focus, the central point "which is everywhere and nowhere" outbreathing and inbreathing its ever radiating rays. The "Soul of the just" is Avalokiteswara "made in the image and likeness" of Adi Buddha, Parabrahm. (April, 1884)

[*Another statement by Lévi, "According to some ancient Hierophants matter is but the* SUBSTRATUM *of created spirits," drew forth the following elucidation.*]

Or the highest *Dhyan Chohans* of Occultism. At the beginning of Manvantara, the *Fohat* which they radiate awakens and differentiates Mahattatva, itself the radiation of *Mulaprakriti.*

(March, 1884)

Spirit is not "sublimated matter," in our opinion. Matter or manifested *prakriti,* however sublimated or refined, is but an emanation from Parabrahmam. The 7th principle of evoluted matter, as it is now technically called in theosophical phraseology, has of course its *latent* existence (which, when closely examined, amounts merely to a permanent possibility of its evolution) in this principle eternally. If the term matter, however, is used to mean that which is technically called Mulaprakriti, this principle may be described as material. But in our opinion this would be misleading. This principle is no doubt in one sense the remote *Upadana Karanam* [basic cause or "Causeless Cause"] of the Universe. Every object in the Universe is constructed out of the elements that emanated from it. But there is no entity in the Universe of which it is *immediately* the *Upadana Karanam.* (September, 1884)

[*The following passages occur in an article by Dharani Dhar Kauthumi, F.T.S., the first referring to the "well known formula of faith," literally translated, "O jewel in the lotus."*—Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

In esoteric phraseology the jewel stands for the pure enlightened spirit, while the lotus is the symbol of creation or cosmic evolution. The true significance of the mysterious formula is that there is no *extra cosmic God,* no *individual* divine Spirit, save the Universal Divine mind in Cosmos descending from the Dhyan-Chohanic host upon mankind in its collectivity, and culminating therefrom in its cyclic progress back to Adi-Buddha—its primeval source.

Exoterically it [Kshetra] means simply—"field," while esoterically it represents "the great abyss" of the Kabalists, the chaos and the plane (*Cteis* or *yoni*) in which the Creative energy implants the germ of the manifested universe. In other words, they are the Purusha and Prakriti of Kapila, the blind and the cripple producing motion by their union, Purusha supplying the head and Prakriti the limbs. (February, 1884)

Spirit got itself entangled with gross matter for the same reason that *life* gets entangled with the *fœtus* matter. It followed a law, and therefore could not help the entanglement to occur.

We know of no eastern philosophy that teaches that "matter originated out of Spirit." Matter is as eternal and indestructible as Spirit and one cannot be made cognizant to our senses without the other—even to our, the highest, spiritual sense. Spirit *per se* is a *non-entity* and *non-existence.* It is the *negation* of every affirmation and of all that is.

No one ever held—as far as we know—that *Spirit* could be *annihilated* under whatever circumstances. Spirit can get divorced of its manifested matter, its personality—in which case, it is the latter that is annihilated. Nor do we believe that "Spirit breathed out Matter"; but that, on the contrary, it is *Matter which manifests Spirit.* Otherwise, it would be a *puzzle* indeed. (January, 1883)

STUDIES IN KARMA

"Republic of Conscience"

ONE of the most elusive Civil Liberties' problems of our time is the relation between government and religion, or State and Church. The issue is raised in several departments of public function: in education, in war and peace, and in programs for social welfare. The question is complicated by certain inherent difficulties, represented by the basic problem of what shall be the legal definitions of "religion," "belief," "conviction," and "conscience." Neutrality must not be sacrificed to clarity, and yet generalities broad enough to be impartial are usually, by the same token, indefinite enough to permit contradictory interpretations. The subtleties of difference between individual minds, the variety of possible beliefs and convictions, and the wide latitude of personal application of the "dictates of conscience"—render freedom of religion a metaphysical proposition. As with freedom of speech, the function of duly constituted civil authorities is not to *provide* the freedom, which would be tantamount to "creating" an inalienable right, but simply to prevent infractions and infringements on that freedom by any institution subject to the jurisdiction of the State.

In an era of institutionalization and totalitarianisms, the issue of religious liberty which was shaped so cleanly by, for instance, the philosophical revolutionaries responsible for the American Bill of Rights, is a confusion of good intentions and bad judgment. Shall the children of America study religion in school? May parochial school children have the benefit of public conveyances? Shall Jehovah's Witnesses be required to salute the flag of the country? These questions are paralleled for adults in other relationships: When do religious beliefs or private opinions become political beliefs for which the person can be held publicly accountable? What is the line between tolerance and treason? A United Press staff correspondent, Ruth Gmeiner, discussing the implications of the recent Supreme Court decision on the Champaign, Illinois, "released time" program, assembled a few dilemmas of this kind:

> Has the Supreme Court laid down rules that may force the armed forces to give up their chaplains?

> If it's illegal for your child to attend religious classes in a public school, isn't it also illegal for the government to require West Point Cadets to go to church on Sunday?
>
> What about the chaplains, paid with tax money, who open each session of the Senate and the House of Representatives with a prayer? School lunches of children in parochial and private schools are paid for out of federal funds. . . . Are these tax-financed programs unconstitutional state aids to religion? . . .

Theosophists will find a special meaning in the historical fact brought out by Justice Black in the Champaign decision, when he observed that "by 1875 the separation of public education from Church entanglements, of the State from the teaching of religion, was firmly established in the consciousness of the nation." But the *impetus* of the century-long struggle that culminated with the inauguration of the present Theosophical Movement is perhaps more important than the accomplished fact, especially since our present era is witnessing a recurrence of the problem that once may have seemed "solved." It will be well, therefore, to search carefully for the intent of the framers of the Bill of Rights, rather than be content with formal phrasings or slogans which generally do not carry the full force of an idea.

The unspoken assumption behind the fervent opposition of Thomas Jefferson to any traffic between religious sects and the State was not that we must protect ourselves against the danger of dominance by a single religious body, but the hope that men might be encouraged to evolve beyond *all* sectarian consciousness and therefore from separative denominational classifications. Jefferson was not a foe of religion, but he clearly war a foe of religions, and this attitude was held by a good many of those philosophically lucid men who shared the moment of karmic destiny in establishing American legal traditions.

The viewpoint of Jefferson and Madison was more than a private opinion: it was consistent with the Renaissance, which was, in simplest terms, a movement away from the religious concept of man—that is, man controlled by institutions. The authoritarian attitude of the Middle Ages broke down slowly, it is true, and in peculiar fashions. Though impelled by the Renaissance belief in the superiority of individual rather than institutional conscience, the Reformation was a step in the development of a hundred-and-one

new sects. Apparently men could not move directly from unified control to individual self-discipline, but yet did come to demand some choice as to the type of control they would accept. Nevertheless, complete religious freedom is, finally, freedom from all institutions. The unspoken message of Jefferson is this, and his ideal of democracy is a dream where men live in the spirit of moral self-reliance.

Since so little attention has been paid to the areas of significant philosophical evaluation which are pre-requisite to an understanding of Jefferson's viewpoint, it is indeed the karma of the present cycle to be confused on the place of religion in the life of a citizen. There are times when the members of all denominations recognize that they stand together to preserve the denominational idea itself. The defenders of civil liberties, on the contrary, are more lonely—they are impelled by an intuition rather than by a need for institutional survival, and seldom have any clear idea of what their opposition entails in philosophical terms. If there were actually any complete atheists, of the no-inner-sense-of-religion type, they would doubtless be utterly uninterested in fighting against sectarian groupings within public schools, for example. It is because they feel, however unconsciously, and seek to express the *non-institutional* viewpoint on the nature of man—itself a positive and affirmative "religion"—that they will undertake costly and exhaustive court debates. In the final analysis, such men are for the one-world attitude which may accompany the progressive disintegration of all sects everywhere.

It may be strange to think of the opponents of religious instruction in the schools, for instance, as heirs to the impulsion of Buddha, Jesus and Gandhi, but in theosophical terms this is exactly the case. Mrs. Vashti McCollum, whose three-year battle for religious freedom successfully culminated in the Supreme Court judgment against the Illinois "released time" program, described herself, in a recent interview, by reference to an impersonal "religious" heritage: "I'm a humanist," she said. "We are neither atheists nor theists. We don't bother ourselves with the question of whether there is or isn't a God. What we try to do is to elevate man's opinion of himself so he'll attack his problems with confidence." (New York *Herald Tribune,* April 25.)

The McCollum case* deserves special attention, for it may set a precedent of wide application in respect to freedom of religion. Particularly valuable is the currency given to a phrase of Jefferson's quoted in the majority decision. Jefferson declared that the First Amendment† was intended to erect "a wall of separation between Church and State." This expression was employed in an earlier Supreme Court decision, which the McCollum opinion reinforced: the case of *Everson* v. *Board of Education of Ewing, New Jersey* (decided February 10, 1947). In the Everson case,‡ the Court upheld (5 to 4) the right of a State board to reimburse parents of parochial school students for carfare to and from school. Justices Robert H. Jackson and Wiley B. Rutledge, Jr., dissenting, took occasion to outline more definitely the principle which they considered had been cited but not upheld in the ruling. By the Court's action in the McCollum case (an 8 to 1 decision), these two dissenting opinions, notable for their grasp of the motives behind the First Amendment, have been accorded new prestige. Several excerpts from the dissents may be profitably reproduced here.

Justice Jackson said:

> The state cannot maintain a Church and it can no more tax its citizens to furnish free carriage to those who attend a Church. . . . Of course, the state may pay out tax-raised funds to relieve pauperism, but it may not under our Constitution do so to induce or reward piety. It may spend funds to secure old age against want, but it may not spend funds to secure religion against skepticism. It may compensate individuals for loss of employment, but it cannot compensate them for adherence to a creed. . . .
>
> We cannot have it both ways. Religious teaching cannot be a private affair when the state seeks to impose regulations which infringe on it indirectly, and a public affair when it comes to taxing citizens of one faith to aid another, or those of no faith to aid all. If these principles seem harsh in prohibiting aid to

*McCollum v. Board of Education. Cf. Lookout for April, 1948, and November, 1945. Quotations are taken from the report of Supreme Court opinions, October term, 1947 (Vol. 92, p. 451).

†"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." United States Constitution, Article I.

‡All quotations are from the opinions of the U.S. Supreme Court, October term, 1946 (Vol. 91, pp. 472-509).

> Catholic education, it must not be forgotten that it is the same Constitution that alone assures Catholics the right to maintain these schools at all when predominant local sentiment would forbid them.

An even broader philosophical and historical ground for dissent was explored by Mr. Justice Rutledge, who reverted to the convictions of Madison* and Jefferson in determining the original intent of the First Amendment. This Amendment, Mr. Rutledge points out, "was broadly but not loosely phrased":

> The Amendment's purpose was not to strike merely at the official establishment of a single sect, creed or religion, outlawing only a formal relation such as had prevailed in England and some of the colonies. Necessarily it was to uproot all such relationships. But the object was broader than separating church and state in this narrow sense. It was to create a complete and permanent separation of the spheres of religious activity and civil authority by comprehensively forbidding every form of public aid or support for religion. . . .
>
> For Madison [the author of the First Amendment], as also for Jefferson, religious freedom was the crux of the struggle for freedom in general. Madison was coauthor with George Mason of the religious clause in Virginia's great Declaration of Rights of 1776. He is credited with changing it from a mere statement of the principle of tolerance to the first official legislative pronouncement that freedom of conscience and religion are inherent rights of the individual.

It was Madison who proposed and secured the passage of the First Amendment to the Constitution, and his original text should be of interest to theosophical students, for it suggests some of the background for H. P. Blavatsky's use of the phrase, "Republic of Conscience." Madison's wording was, "The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner, or in any pretext, infringed." Had such a declaration been ratified at the outset of United States' history, it would be next to impossible to prove the

*The complete text of Madison's *Remonstrance*, a historic statement of the incompatibility of Church and State in a Republic of freedom and brotherhood, was published by Mr. Rutledge at the end of his opinion. Some extracts are given in this issue, p. 453.

constitutionality of the most recent law involving "religious training and belief." The 1948 Selective Service Act has a provision which reads:

> Nothing contained in this act shall be construed to require any person to be subject to combatant service (which for the purpose hereof includes training for combatant duties) in the armed forces of the United States who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form. *Religious training and belief is a relation to a Supreme Being* involving duties superior to those arising from any human relation, but does not include essentially sociological or philosophical views or a merely personal moral code. [Italics ours.]

The identification of conscience with organized religion or church teaching, and the definition of religion as a relation to "a Supreme Being" is a far cry from the philosophical concept of religion promulgated so earnestly by Paine, Jefferson and Madison. How this latest denial of "the full and equal rights of conscience" will be received by the protagonists of civil rights remains to be seen.

The conclusion reached on Mrs. Vashti McCollum's suit against the "released time" program in Champaign public schools is a major advance away from any State religion. The majority opinion declared that the Supreme Court was unable to accept the argument that the First Amendment "was intended to forbid only governmental preference of one religion over another, not an impartial governmental assistance of all religions." The State, in other words, should not even recognize the existence of a sect: sectarians are to be protected as *individuals,* not as members of a sect. Justice Felix Frankfurter, in concurring, stated that—

> in no activity of the State is it more vital to keep out divisive forces than in schools, to avoid confusing, not to say fusing, what the Constitution sought to keep strictly apart. "The great American principle of eternal separation"—Elihu Root's phrase bears repetition—is one of the vital reliances of our Constitutional system for assuring unities among our people stronger than our diversities. It is the Court's duty to enforce this principle in its full integrity.

The implications of the McCollum decision will be further tested in the courts, as variations on the "released time" program are brought up for judicial review. *The Open Forum,* organ of the

American Civil Liberties Union, reports (June 26) a "sweeping decision" rendered by the Circuit Court of St. Louis, Missouri, which, if upheld, will outlaw the religious education experiment all over the nation. Circuit Judge William K. Koerner, on May 25, ruled that individual differences between religious programs connected with public schools are "inconsequential":

> Whether these sectarian classes are conducted in the school buildings or elsewhere can make no difference, since attendance upon them during compulsory school hours is deemed attendance at school. Failure to exercise supervision over the instructors of religion and to require the keeping of proper attendance records does not make the school program legal; it merely indicates laxity on the part of the school authorities. The fact that any sect may participate in this program is immaterial; the public schools can not be used to aid one religion or to aid all religions.

The encroachments of sectarian religion upon public institutions and upon the individual citizen's civil liberties will not be wiped out by one Supreme Court decision, nor by ten, and it is not yet certain that even the highest tribunal of the land will be immune to religious pressure groups who seek an offensive and defensive alliance between Church and State. But the slow accretion of judicial precedents, reflecting the fundamentals of this country's original political idealists, will continue to build for the "republic of conscience" they had in view, and it may yet befall that the true American, like the true theosophist, will belong to *no* cult or sect, yet belong to each and all.

"Divine Right"

No invader ever raised standard but persuaded himself that he had a just cause. Sacrifices and prayers have preceded every military expedition. . . . Attila conceived himself to have a "Divine claim to the dominion of the earth"; the Spaniards subdued the Indians under plea of converting them to Christianity, hanging thirteen refractory ones in honor of Jesus Christ and his apostles; and we English justify our colonial aggressions by saying that the Creator intended the Anglo-Saxon race to people the world! An insatiate lust of conquest transmutes manslaying into a virtue; and amongst more races than one implacable revenge has made assassination a duty.

—Herbert Spencer

MADISON ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

[From 1776 to 1786, James Madison kept alive the struggle for religious freedom in Virginia, and in the final phase of the battle delivered his famous "Memorial and Remonstrance," denouncing the Assessment Bill, a taxing measure for the support of religion. Even though at the end the bill had been sufficiently modified to give each taxpayer the privilege of designating which church should receive his share of the tax, and also left him the option of giving his tax to education, Madison was adamant in opposing the precedent followed. The Remonstrance, as Supreme Court Justice Rutledge has recently pointed out, "is a broadside attack upon all forms of 'establishment' of religion, both general and particular, nondiscriminatory or selective." Madison's document aroused a storm of popular protest which defeated the Bill and cleared the way for Jefferson's Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom. Portions of the Remonstrance are reprinted below. —Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

THE Religion of every man must be left to the conviction and conscience of every man; and it is the right of every man to exercise it as these may dictate. . . .

It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of citizens, and one of [the] noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The freemen of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise, and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much, soon to forget it.

Who does not see that the same authority which can establish Christianity, in exclusion of all other Religions, may establish with the same ease any particular sect of Christians, in exclusion of all other sects? That the same authority which can force a citizen to contribute three pence only of his property for the support of any one establishment, may force him to conform to any other establishment in all cases whatsoever? . . .

The bill implies either that the Civil Magistrate is a competent Judge of Religious truth; or that he may employ Religion as an engine of Civil policy. The first is an arrogant pretension falsified

by the contradictory opinions of Rulers in all ages, and throughout the world: The second an unhallowed perversion of the means of salvation.

The establishment proposed by the Bill is not requisite for the support of the Christian Religion. To say that it is, is a contradiction to the Christian Religion itself; for every page of it disavows a dependence on the powers of this world; it is a contradiction to fact; for it is known that this Religion both existed and flourished, not only without the support of human laws, but in spite of every opposition from them; and not only during the period of miraculous aid, but long after it had been left to its own evidence, and the ordinary care of Providence: Nay, it is a contradiction in terms; for a Religion not invented by human policy, must have preexisted and been supported, before it was established by human policy. It is moreover to weaken in those who profess this Religion a pious confidence in its innate excellence, and the patronage of its Author; and to foster in those who still reject it, a suspicion that its friends are too conscious of its fallacies, to trust it to its own merits. . . .

What influence in fact have ecclesiastical establishments had on Civil Society? In some instances they have been seen to erect a spiritual tyranny on the ruins of Civil authority; in many instances they have been seen upholding the thrones of political tyranny; in no instance have they been seen the guardians of the liberties of the people. . . .

Torrents of blood have been spilt in the old world, by vain attempts of the secular arm to extinguish Religious discord, by proscribing all difference in Religious opinions. Time has at length revealed the true remedy. Every relaxation of narrow and rigorous policy, wherever it has been tried, has been found to assuage the disease. The American Theatre has exhibited proofs, that equal and compleat liberty, if it does not wholly eradicate it, sufficiently destroys its malignant influence on the health and prosperity of the State. . . . The very appearance of the Bill has transformed that "Christian forbearance, love and charity," which of late mutually prevailed, into animosities and jealousies, which may not soon be appeased. What mischiefs may not be dreaded should this enemy of the public quiet be armed with the force of law?

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—

If truth is universal, why do we have to study to learn it? And why are we so often mistaken about it?

When we speak of universal truth, we do not mean that truth is universally *evident,* but that, once found, it is capable of universal application. (See H. P. Blavatsky on "What is Truth?" THEOSOPHY XXVII, 347.) We can infer from the section in the *Secret Doctrine* on "Races with the 'Third Eye'," that men in the early cycles saw, effortlessly, the principle involved in anything to which they turned their minds. This is not true of humanity at present. We have to search hard for the principles of truth, and even then, as the questioner points out, we make mistakes. Why?

The history of the later Atlanteans (who were, of course, ourselves) contains reference to many things which they did with full knowledge of the evil consequences which would ensue. As they continued to act contrary to their higher perceptions, they began, naturally, to lose those perceptions—which are still lost to most of us most of the time. This is the karma which we inherit from ourselves in other ages: when we do those things which we see we should not do, or when we refrain from doing what we see we ought to do, we add to the density of those clouds which so irritatingly cut off our vision at the very time when we most want to see. The man who never leaves a good intention to moulder, unfulfilled, will not lack for long the wisdom to apply his good intentions with knowledge and power.

What is meant by the statement that Theosophy gives a "self-compelling basis for ethics"? This seems to imply that knowing about the theosophical philosophy is going to make men ethical. Yet we know that theosophists aren't perfect, any more than anyone else.

It is the implications of this very idea that "no one is perfect" that Mr. Judge was opposing, we think, when he spoke of the self-compelling basis for ethics. The idea that perfect action for every being at every moment is attainable, is the only root that can sustain true ethics. Consider, for instance, that both science and

religion give out the idea that there is someone or something *outside of man* which, through superior force, can compel him to act in some particular manner currently deemed "moral." A man cannot be truly moral (no matter how well-behaved he is) unless he is so from his own free choice. The theosophical ideas alone allow and encourage men to be moral in the ultimate sense. They have this power because, rightly understood, they free man from all fear of external compulsion. These ideas heighten his awareness of the Self within which *impels* him to a higher life.

As long as men act from fear of punishment, from hope of reward or from the desire for self-aggrandizement, they only *appear* to be acting morally. There is, of course, the danger that Theosophy may be taken with similar attitudes. This makes the difference between Theosophy "pure and simple" and Theosophy-made-into-a-religion. If we find ourselves beginning to think of Karma, for instance, as something which is going to "catch up with us" if we do something "wrong," we have temporarily slipped from the Self-compelling basis for ethics to the fate and fear psychology.

The philosophy of all the Great Teachers rests on the recognition that morality, justice, honesty, and self-sacrifice are qualities which are native to the soul, and which, therefore, men need only to be encouraged to seek freely and eagerly as ends in themselves. H.P.B. said of Truth: "To approach even terrestrial truth requires, first of all, *love of truth for its own sake,* for otherwise no recognition of it will follow." Every man occasionally comes to such a recognition of truth *as truth,* and not simply as something good or pleasant or useful. In the same way, Theosophy teaches, it is in the nature of man that, once freed from misconceptions, he will seek real virtue as something homogeneous with himself and spontaneously attempt to perform right action.

Is there any way to overcome indifference in other people? Just being enthusiastic yourself doesn't seem to do it.

It couldn't be expected to, could it?—because enthusiasm by itself never accomplishes anything. And often we dissipate what eagerness for work we do have by trying to generate an equal enthusiasm in others. The proper end of enthusiasm is work, not propaganda. If we've ever tried to "entertain" a young child, we

have probably discovered in short order that his indifference or standoffishness was not overcome by a sparkling monologue about "how nice it would be to do a certain thing, wouldn't it, little boy?" But if he perceives us enthusiastically *engaged* in some activity, there may arise in him the natural desire to participate.

What is violence? There are various kinds of violence, and it does not seem enough to define it as force used either to compel a man to do a certain thing or to keep him from doing it. Restraint is not necessarily a form of violence, and we often take violent physical means to save someone from danger.

Don't you think that what needs to be studied are the subtler forms of violence that impose upon the free will of others—dogma and propaganda, for instance, and *their* sources in prejudice and suspicion. No man who does what is *necessary*—what is his duty —can violate any one else's integrity.

But how do we determine our duty? We could take the criterion of what is best for the whole. Still, all depends on how we apply that criterion. Suppose a nation, or any individual, felt that it would be "best for the world" to destroy some other nation, or dispose of some other individual, who seemed to be a liability rather than an asset to human progress. Does not the feeling of superiority, like that of self-righteousness, predispose a man to violence?

Take the Inquisition, for instance. It was further corrupted by lust for personal power and gain, of course, but there were Inquisitors who sincerely believed that by burning "bad" people at the stake, they were giving them their only possible chance of salvation. The Inquisition shows the lengths to which men will go to save other people's souls for them. It is evident that there's a difference between saying, "I will sacrifice *myself* for what I consider the good of the world," and "I will sacrifice so-and-so for the good of the world—or for his own good."

Without a recognition and a real respect for the integrity and independence of *all other souls,* just having what we think is a "good motive" will not keep us from doing violence to our fellows. And conversely, if we really see other people as evolving souls, that perception in itself will enlighten the fine line between what Mr. Judge terms "intelligent interference" and any kind of violence.

"THE PATH"— MIDDLE YEARS

The Third Year

THIS magazine begins its third year with the present number. While we are not sectarian, we acknowledge having a definite object in view in all the articles so far admitted to our columns. That object is to spread a knowledge of the Wisdom-Religion as we understand it, and to lay before the readers what we consider the true view of Theosophy and the aims of the Theosophical Society. *The Path,* however, while devoted to that Cause, is not an official organ; for, if it were, some responsibility for its utterances might be placed upon the Society on the one hand, and the Magazine itself limited in its operation on the other. We aspire to fulfil the wishes of the Masters who impelled the organization of the Society, that men may be led to study, believe in, and practice the immemorial doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion once widespread and now preserved in Tibet to be given to the world as it becomes ready to receive.

May the Blessed Masters guide us to the everlasting Truth! May we tread the small old path on which the sages walk who know Brahman! May we all pass beyond the sea of darkness! Hari! Om!

End of our Third Year

With this number the third year of *The Path's* existence comes to an end. The only definite rule we made in the conduct of the Magazine has been to treat all with fairness and calmness. We have not indulged in flattery of any person, and have endeavored as much as possible to keep personalities, whether adverse or otherwise, out of our columns; and with the result of the past year's work we now have no concern, because, that work having been done, it remains in the hands of the great law of Karma and not in ours.

It is with a trace of sorrow that we record the fact that the *Path* has not been supported by subscribing theosophists, but mainly by those who are not members of the Society. This is strange but true, and resembles another curious fact, which is that the Theo-

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NOTE.—This installment of Wm. Q. Judge's editorials from *The Path* covers two years. The articles appeared, respectively, in April, 1888; March, 1889; March, 1890; and April, 1890.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.

sophical Publication Society of London, organized by theosophists, draws its subscribers and helpers from America. We have no hope of changing human nature now, and, knowing its tendency to materiality, we would never have brought out this Magazine did we not have supreme faith in those Beings and forces controlling the destiny of nations and individuals, well knowing that They will see that these efforts, made for the cause of humanity, shall not be devoid of fruit. That desired fruit is not money or any material profit, but solely a change in the thoughts and ethics of the people. And we would have all sincere theosophists of the same mind, to the end that they may work unceasingly for the cause of theosophy in the channel at present fixed by Masters—the Theosophical Society, without hope of profit or material reward, and, if possible, even without hope of any profit whatever.

To those who have helped us with thoughts, with means, and with pen, we extend our thanks; we may have enemies, but as yet they have not made their appearance: to them, if in existence, we tender our sympathy, for fear is not a quality we possess, and enmity we hold for none.

Some of our readers have wondered what *is* the end and what should be the watchwords; the end is truth and brotherhood; the watchwords, faith, courage, and constancy.

To Non-Subscribers

The present number ends the fourth volume of the *Path.*

All Theosophists who can afford $2.00 per year are asked if they should not support *The Path.* The magazine is not carried on for profit, and is solely devoted to the interests of the Theosophical Society, and yet it is a fact that its subscribers are nearly all non-theosophists. Its editor and its writers all work for nothing, but for four years it has been published at a loss which is always met out of private means. Members of the Society who all know that *The Path* maintains an independent attitude, supporting no clique and pandering to no self-interest, should not keep back their support from a journal that does much to keep alive and make respected the Society and its literature. We can now point to four volumes in which will be found consistent theosophical articles, well-written, by students who all have devoted years to the subject,

and we ask your subscription. *The Path* will not stop even if this suggestion is not followed, because so long as the Editor thinks the Society can be helped by it, he will publish the magazine. Nevertheless, a larger circulation aids a magazine in every way, bringing it to the attention of persons otherwise ignorant of it and of its mission, stimulating writers to their best efforts for its columns, ensuring more notice of and quotation from it by other periodicals. One exceedingly valuable assistance to both it and Theosophy is private subscription on behalf of Public Libraries. It would be well if every such Library, willing to give it a place, was supplied regularly with the *Path* by private subscription. About 13 are thus supplied at present, and no one can calculate the missionizing influence thereby exerted. Well-to-do Theosophists can order it sent to their poorer Brethren also, not as a benefaction to the Editor, but to them and to the Cause. For the *life* of a movement is largely in its literature, and its literature is epitomized in its magazines.

The Path's Fifth Year

Our Magazine has turned the last corner of the square and now enters upon its fifth year. Whether it shall live ten or twenty years longer we know not, but as the future grows from the present and the past is ever being repeated in the future, so its four years of activity just ended are not dead, for they will reproduce their influence in the years that are to come until their force is increased by being swallowed up in those that are stronger.

In the third month of the first year of *The Path* its death within the year was predicted, but fate has ruled otherwise, and we have been accorded the opportunity of attempting to erect the four pillars of Sincerity, Devotion, Determination of Purpose, and Integrity. This year will decide what success has attended the attempt. For as five is the number of *Light,* it will reveal all, and by its power as *Justice* and *Nemesis* it will appropriately measure out the compensation, since its position in the centre between 1 and 9 makes of it the middle of the balance, for although the series of 9 is not completed, yet when 5 is reached the future is potentially present up to 9. We can rely then only on the Law and not upon the favor of any one;—this we do with cheerfulness.

The year just closed has been a pleasant one, revealing new earnest hearts and willing hands. Let us press forward with new energy in the work of the next four years, for when the second fifth is reached an important era for theosophists and the world will be at hand, when the result of again being weighed in the balance of events will be more serious than it is now.

> "Point out the 'Way'—however dimly and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their Path in darkness."

"Illuminated Motes" of Truth

As far as I know, all the phenomena known about light have their counterparts as to truth. What observation teaches us about the one, intuition proclaims to be applicable to the other. . . . Rays of light streaming into a dark chamber seem to be visible. They are not. You have only to place a white-hot poker in them to see that the glowing iron is enshrouded in darkness. . . . The hot poker consumes all the motes and dust particles around it. The rays are mere invisible vibrations of the ether. It is only the illuminated motes that we see. Their minuteness makes it seem that we see the rays. Does not this illustrate forcibly the equal impossibility of seeing truth? We are apt to think that we see truth, and consequently that our opinions must needs be absolutely correct. . . .

The fact is that no one is in mental observation of absolute truth: however much it seems so, it is only the impinging of its pulsations on our thought motes that becomes obvious to the mind, and perhaps when people get overheated in argument, and lose all perception of even what gleams they had, then passion is doing very much the same destructive work to their thoughts as the white-hot poker did to the motes in the experiment. This is but one instance, showing how detailed is the coincidence of correlation, and how the laws governing truth are manifested by those governing light. And does it not in some degree establish that a concurrent study of physics and metaphysics makes physical science more in touch with human nature, and generally more productive, while it renders the metaphysical tangible and substantial? —Charles E. Benham

Lucifer, February, 1890

MIND OF THE AGE

IV: Romance

A FAITH in "romance" must be regarded as an important constituent of the Western mind-set. However loosely the term "romance" may be used, it suggests to nearly every Westerner something he either believes or is tempted to believe—that the highest value of his existence may be found in adventure through various physical experiences which focus intense emotions. Every religion, of course, is founded upon a belief in the superiority of certain states of feeling or emotion. Religion may easily be distinguished from philosophy by this definition, also, for philosophy does not concern itself with the attainment of emotional states, but instead with what purposive use is to be made of them.

The much older and more renunciation-minded East, in its successive developments of Hindu and Buddhist religion, has devoted considerable attention to the experience of states of feeling which completely *transcend* physical sensations. Western civilization, save for the confused interruption of medieval Christianity, has believed that the end of human life is the attainment of a state of human feeling intimately *associated* with sensation. This is the unacknowledged religion which still commands the allegiance of the majority of men and women of English-speaking countries in particular. The Asiatics, we say, tend to be "stoics." Americans confess to being "romanticists," and usually are secretly a little proud of the admission.

There are various ways of analyzing romanticism. It is often regarded as a sort of childish pre-occupation with involvement of the two sexes, and a sublimation in art and literature of the same mood. These, in a sense, are the tendencies which link man much more securely to physical than to moral values. It must be remembered that "romance" among Western peoples has also produced some creditable results. The courageous opposition to religious authoritarianism, which allied itself with the quest for freedom of the human spirit, focussed upon a surge of romanticism. The Renaissance, with its revival of Grecian concepts of art and Grecian tastes in literature, was a recurrence of the belief in the real value of the

physical world. The matter of defining human "desire" received a different kind of attention, for the personal and romantic desires in men were held to be potentially beautiful rather than sinful. This movement in thought, which accompanied the march of the scientific spirit of free investigation from Newton to Freud, increased popular respect for the physical world, and was a trend which affrighted both Catholics and Puritans. But the most strenuous efforts produced by Catholic organization and Fundamentalist revivalism failed to check the widespread effort to vindicate man's belief in the value of his emotions. The religion of romanticism, as all religions, has a few foundations in reality, however obscure.

The Theosophical philosophy suggests that every phase of existence contains evolutionary significance. Just as it is legitimate to argue from Theosophical principles that the neglect of moral man is a crime against nature, so it must be that an *a priori* derision of all values incident to participation in the emotions dissects "nature" unnaturally. In terms of basic analysis, the question becomes not, "Is this emotion to be rejected because it is an emotion?" but "Is this emotion inclusive or exclusive?" Both "private individual salvation"—in the sense of deliverance from all human involvements—and a possessive passion, limit one's rapport with others, and both these engrossing states of consciousness are obstacles to the growth of beings *toward* each other in brotherhood.

In refreshing contrast to the narrow and confining attitudes which surround modern human relations with so much of fear and reluctance, suspicion and obtuseness, are the attitudes toward personal relations, that are implicit in and explicitly illustrated by the lives of H. P. Blavatsky, Wm. Q. Judge, and Robert Crosbie. Such philosophers have begun with the premise that no intimacy between people arises without cause, although it may assert itself in a comparatively short time. All "practical Theosophists" have suggested that the karma of affinity be probed with the principle of reincarnation, for they knew that the influence of the past on the future will operate to better effect if the individual mind carrying that influence is trained to note, measure, and direct its affinities, instead of being carried away by them. Mr. Judge makes several references to this time-honored principle of human relations. In his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita,* he explores the possibility in these words:

> Suppose in some life long-past I had a dear friend, or wife, or relative, with whom my intimacy was interior and deep. Death separates us, and in subsequent lives he devotes himself to truth, to wisdom, to the highest in him, while I go on careless of all but pleasure in the present. After many lives we meet again as either friends or acquaintances. At once the old intimacy asserts itself, and my former friend—although maybe neither of us knows it—has a strange power to touch my inward life, and wakes me up to search for truth and my own soul. It is the unexpended affinity, and by its aid nature works my salvation.
>
> Then we should both seek devotion. . . .

A self-impelled growth toward realization of Karma does not lead one to fear and distrust all emotions, but rather to the intelligent rejection of *certain* emotions. The love of man for woman, involving perhaps the most personal of all attachments, will not be without value for him who seeks, in this instance, as in all others, to build upon each value another and greater one. The Western urge to adventure and the Eastern desire to find a realm beyond the distraction of emotions may, then, be complementary rather than antithetical. The journey of the soul is no less a journey, whatever the terrain traversed. Of course, it is only a true journey when undertaken with a desire to reach a goal, yet is this necessarily less true of the men who live bold and colorful lives than of those who live in the hope of transcending "color"?

Every trend of religious thought has carried with it much of negation, and because men must assert as well as refuse to live as growing souls, they have been led to "sin" by the very constraining influence of their religions. It is necessary to find some way of separating man's belief in the value or beauty of his emotions from his tendency to indulge those emotions without control or purpose. That which is deepest in religion—a sense of purpose—*could* combine with that which is full of life and vigor. Yet, "adventurous" men seldom do this—though when they do we may find that their religions are notably excellent. The men of religion seldom deign to try, and this may be because they both fear and envy audacious and wholly confident spirits.

Walt Whitman combined the realities of both "Eastern" and "Western" points of view in his incomparable "Song of the Open Road." Some of the stanzas of this poem are worth close scrutiny

in the light of Theosophical principles. Whitman is interested in both the world of the senses and the evolution of the soul. Who is not? But Whitman's perception in these lines is that one's *attitudes* towards emotional life are the enemies of tranquility and happiness, so that one need not negate *life itself* to be calm and self-sufficient, but only any particular *thing* in life.

Afoot and light-hearted, I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me, leading wherever I choose.
Henceforth I ask not good-fortune—I myself am good fortune;
Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need nothing,
Strong and content, I travel the open road.

The earth—that is sufficient;
I do not want the constellations any nearer;
I know they are very well where they are;
I know they suffice for those who belong to them.

(Still here I carry my old delicious burdens;
I carry them, men and women—I carry them with me wherever I go;
I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them;
I am fill'd with them, and I will fill them in return.)

* * *

To gather the minds of men out of their brains as you encounter them—to gather the love out of their hearts,
To take your lovers on the road with you, for all that you leave them behind you,
To know the universe itself as a road—as many roads—as roads for traveling souls.

The Soul travels;
The body does not travel as much as the soul;
The body has just as great a work as the soul, and parts away at last for the journeys of the soul.

All parts away for the progress of souls;
All religion, all solid things, arts, governments,—all that was or is apparent upon this globe or any globe, falls into niches and corners before the procession of Souls along the grand roads of the universe.

Of the progress of the souls of men and women along the grand roads of the universe, all other progress is the needed emblem and sustenance.

* * *

Allons! we must not stop here!
However sweet these laid-up stores—however convenient this dwelling, we cannot remain here;
However shelter'd this port, and however calm these waters, we must not anchor here;
However welcome the hospitality that surrounds us, we are permitted to receive it but a little while.

* * *

My call is the call of battle—I nourish active rebellion;
He going with me must go well arm'd.
He going with me goes often with spare diet, poverty, angry enemies, desertions.

Allons! the road is before us!
It is safe—I have tried it—my own feet have tried it well. * * *
Mon enfant! I give you my hand!
I give you my love, more precious than money,
I give you myself, before preaching or law;
Will you give me yourself? will you come travel with me?
Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?

Whitman's "Song" is the most hopeful and most real "American Dream." In it there is much of courage, and beneath the surface, much of philosophy. While some may come to appreciate the reality of Theosophical principles through emotional disappointments, it may be that many more will arrive at that point when they can come as Whitman came—not as a result of weakness perceived, but rather through strength achieved.

Life is an unfoldment, and the further we travel the more truth we can comprehend. To understand the things that are at our door is the best preparation for understanding those that lie beyond.

—*Hypatia*

ON THE LOOKOUT

"Puzzled People"

Reincarnation is finding its way into many places where it will reach the public eye—into a book, for instance, by Mass-Observation, *Puzzled People* (Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, 1948). Mass-Observation is a British fact-finding organization which describes itself as entirely independent and having no political, commercial or other tie-ups of any kind. Its object:

> Mass-Observation does not believe that social science can operate effectively only at the academic level. Its job is to study real life; and the people it studies are people who can be interested immediately in the results, which directly concern their own everyday lives.

Puzzled People, "A Study in popular attitudes to religion, ethics, progress and politics in a London Borough," was prepared for the Ethical Union, but the interpretation of evidence is completely independent of the client, whose views are expressed only in a special preface. The main "finding" of the book is indicated by its title. Mass-Observation makes the further generalization:

> . . . most people nowadays don't think much about religion, don't set much conscious store by it, and have decidedly confused ideas about it. . . . A sort of inert agnosticism exists on many subjects, without any corresponding vitality attached to the superseding belief—indeed, often without any corresponding belief at all. . . . Diversity of positive opinion and belief is a healthy sign. Uninformed, misinformed, underinformed and inconsistent opinions and beliefs are not.

Reincarnation—A Spontaneous Belief

Mass-Observation was doubtless not much surprised by the evidence of this widespread confusion of beliefs, but the strong current of belief in reincarnation was "unexpected":

> The conception of life after death was explored at various levels—by long informal conversations and through the written comments of Mass-Observation's National Panel. Perhaps the least expected, and in some ways the most significant, fact which came to light was the extent of belief in reincarnation. Among

> the interview sample about one person in twenty-five *spontaneously* went into enough detail to show that they held some such belief. That amounts to about one in ten of those who have any definite belief in an afterlife at all, and is almost certainly an underestimate, since no attempt was made by direct questioning to go into the details of people's conception.

One middle-class housewife wrote: "I definitely really believe that I shall be reborn in another incarnation, and that I shall remember a little of now, and be very interested in new developments."

"COMING UP AGAIN"

A woman of fifty-five put it this way:

> "I think that we come up again as somebody else. Like another person—another branch of the family. There are often two people that resemble one another. You can see them; they've got all the same ways and there's such a strong resemblance."

An example of the simpler "rational" basis for believing in reincarnation, says Mass-Observation, comes from an old man: "Well, according to books and reading, they say you return in a different form. I would say there's life in you after you're dead. Did you know your hair grows after you're buried? So that proves there is."

A woman explained her belief in a written comment:

> "I believe in a series of human lives, and when one has learnt what one has to learn from them, I think the spiritual life goes on in conditions which I am unable to imagine. Death will be a new adventure—interesting. Perhaps one is much more free. Does the butterfly remember the chrysalis, let alone the larva? Time shackles us now—perhaps we shall not be bounded by it then. Of course, we shall in other human lives, but not for ever."

"SOMETHING TO DO"

The specific beliefs accepted vary widely, but all seem to share in common the fundamental conviction that man (or "life," "nature," or the "world") *goes on.* (This idea is examined and extended in the new pamphlet, "What is Death?" just published by The Theosophy Company.) Two working-class women, giving their idea of the after-life, showed that more important to them than what the *condition* itself would be like, was the feeling that it would be *purposeful:*

"Oh well, I've got great faith in a better existence after this one, and so has my husband. But I'm sure I don't know what you do with your time. I don't think you can waste it in enjoying yourself, I sort of think you have a nice long rest and then find something to do."

"Well, I dunno. You think different things at different times. . . . I think you'll see the people you love again, or there wouldn't be any point in it. What always puzzled me was, people that believe anything never seem to think there'll be any work there. People will just sit around enjoying themselves. I don't know about that, myself. I've always worked. I wouldn't know what to do with myself."

"The Desire Remains"

Mass-Observation, in attempting to account for the "widespread acceptance" of the idea of reincarnation, comments: "The significance of this belief—not included in the dogmas of any religious system at all widely adhered to in this country—would appear to lie in its materialistic character. The conception of a spiritual or non-corporeal existence is not required, and the mind used to seeing everything in material terms finds less to boggle at." We would suggest that the key to the popularity of the idea lies in the basic and almost ineradicable sense, not of materiality, but of continuity—termed in Theosophy an *inherent idea.* In one sense, Mass-Observation corroborates this:

> We suggest that, whatever else the confusion of ideas demonstrated may imply, it cannot be taken as meaning simple lack of interest. People are *not* content to pass over the question of life after death as unimportant and see life simply as a matter of making the best of this world. Very many are unable to accept the idea of an afterlife, but that does not mean that they are content to reject it. The desire remains.

Apparently, the "inert agnosticism on many subjects" which Mass-Observation deplores does not extend to the Fundamentals of human existence!

"The Only Explanation Left"

From a Swiss paper, retold by the *Rheinischer Merkur (Rheinish Mercury)* Koblenz, Germany, in its issue of May 31, 1947, came the following (translated for Theosophy):

"So we have recently been informed that a Sicilian peasant, not used to drinking, was regaled by friends with heavy wine, until he sank into a deep sleep; when he awoke, to the astonishment of his family he addressed his surrounding friends with completely strange words, which turned out to be old Greek. The peasant is absolutely uneducated and never spoke or understood Greek, still less the classical language of the old Hellenes. It posed quite a riddle to his friends and to the professors who were called and recognized the words as genuine. So the only explanation left was the belief in transmigration of the soul. . . ."

"Abroad in the Whole World"

In recounting this, the German paper comments, "Not only here with us, but also abroad in the whole world, things happen, of which our school learning never even dreams about. . . ."

A similar case is described in a message from India. In the town of Ihansi, a small girl fell out of a third story window. She did not suffer any bodily harm, but suddenly started to talk in several languages, which turned out to be old Indian dialects which had not been used for very many years and had died out.

The more and more frequent publicity given to such instances must perform a real service in the advancement of the race, by combatting nihilistic "scientific" materialism in indicating a purpose in human existence which extends beyond the present life and circumstances:

Memory—the despair of the materialist, the enigma of the psychologist, the sphinx of science—is to the student of old philosophies merely a name to express that power which man unconsciously exerts . . . to look with inner sight into the astral light, and there behold the images of past sensations and incidents. . . . That flash of memory which is traditionally supposed to show a drowning man every long-forgotten scene of his mortal life . . . is simply the sudden glimpse which the struggling soul gets into the silent galleries where his history is depicted in imperishable colours. (*Isis* I, 178.)

Mystifying Mischief

Dr. Franz J. Polgar, 48-year-old Hungarian-born doctor of psychology, explained to his interviewer (Los Angeles *Times,* May 11):

"I am not a superman. Perhaps a genius, yes. But not a superman." . . . Somewhat like a sleepwalker, his grey-green eyes half

> shut, he found carefully hidden coins merely by "reading" the minds of the people who hid them. And later he hypnotized a newspaper reporter into disliking the taste of a free cigarette—one of his toughest triumphs.

"Just Entertainment"

It must of course be mildly puzzling to many people that a man who considers himself "perhaps a genius" has discovered no more constructive outlet for his talents than the finding of carefully hidden coins. Genius, which is simply the efficient focus for egoic power, merits theosophical recognition only "in the degree of its potentiality of moral results." Dr. Polgar's use of his talents merits consideration on other, if less favorable, grounds.

While we may assign a good portion of the flippancy of the interview to the "bouncey" spirits of the interviewer himself, it is clear that Dr. Polgar views his work as entertainment, and refuses

> to dabble in the medical field except as occasional adviser to doctors who regard hypnosis as a help under certain conditions. (Dr. Polgar hypnotized his own wife during the birth of their two children and even today he claims these youngsters "behave better" when he is around.)
>
> Asked whether his skill could be put to practical use in international diplomacy, Dr. Polgar observed firmly: "If I had five minutes with them, I could hypnotize the world leaders, and maybe arrange to give the world some peace and quiet." . . .

"Moral Confederates"

A theosophical view of the activities of Dr. Polgar—and all other hypnotic entertainers—suggests a far different outcome than "peace and quiet," as one with considerable experience in *occult* psychology suggested as long ago as 1890. Deploring experiments in hypnotism, "whether as an object of lucre or speculation," H. P. Blavatsky makes the challenging statement that "it is incumbent on every scientific body—nay, on every government—to put an end to public exhibitions of this sort." While some would resent any such attempted "censorship," the suggestion should have a fair hearing, if only because it also represents the conclusion of the modern "father" of hypnotism, J. M. Charcot. H. P. Blavatsky writes:

> Men of undeniable scientific education who experiment on Hypnotism in public, lend thereby the sanction of their names to such performances. And then every unworthy speculator acute enough to understand the process may, by developing by practice and perseverance the same force in himself, apply it to his own selfish, often criminal, ends. *Result on Karmic Lines:* every Hypnotist, every man of Science, however well-meaning and honorable, once he has allowed himself to become the unconscious instructor of one who learns but to abuse the sacred science, becomes, of course, morally the confederate of every crime committed by this means. (THEOSOPHY xxx, 501.)

ON PROFESSIONAL HYPNOSIS

While the moral responsibility assigned by Mme. Blavatsky is by no means fully recognized in the profession, the legal accountability of hypnotists is receiving definition. The New York *Daily News* (April 30) notes the filing of damage suits totalling $100,000, brought against a Dr. Hyman Blumenthal, Jersey City dentist charged with using his 19-year-old assistant as a subject for experiments in hypnosis. The girl alleges that she was forced to submit to his experiments, and that she became so physically and mentally ill that she was forced to enter a hospital.

Dr. Blumenthal was doubtless engaged in developing facility in hypnotizing "professionally," as this technique is presently being used by some dentists to replace drugs and anesthesia. (Ralph Slater now offers doctors a ten-dollar "professional course" teaching them how to use hypnosis to correct bad habits, phobias, neuroses; to treat many functional disorders; to help them develop "self-confidence and a commanding personality" which will increase "control over your patients." In Los Angeles, another hypnotist is offering his services to physicians as "assistance" to them in treating "alcoholic nerves," phobias, and all "bad habits." He also proposes to inspire self-confidence by "medical hypnosis" under the doctor's supervision.)

An alternative to such techniques is indicated in recent experiments in music therapy, which represent the opening up of a little-investigated part of the science of vibrations. The curative as well as relaxing power of sound (when used rightly) has become the subject of scientific inquiry. J. J. O'Neill reported (New York *Herald Tribune,* Oct. 5, 1947) that the "living patterns of vibra-

tions when translated into nerve impulses may be able to reach places in our bodies where neither drugs nor radiation can penetrate."

Hypnotism and the Life Processes

The use of hypnotism to induce anesthesia is popular apparently because it seems a harmless substitute for drugs which have sometimes disastrous and always depressing effects on heart-action. Yet hypnotism must affect the heart in the same way it affects the molecules of the body in general, and this would certainly inhibit the heart's action. Researches of modern scientists have so far done nothing to invalidate the theosophical diagnosis of the hypnotic process:

> The process of hypnotizing is as yet unknown in respect to what does happen to the molecules. We claim that those molecules are pressed from periphery to center instead of being expanded from the inside to the surface. This contraction is one of the symptoms of death, and therefore hypnotizing is a long step toward physical and moral death.

Action of the Living Cell

In his article, "Hypnotism and Theosophy," Mr. Judge points out that the anesthetic effects of hypnotism can be duplicated by mesmerism *without any bad effects,* since it has an *expansive* effect on the molecules. "This point," he adds, "is not known to the medical profession, nor will it be as they now proceed, because *post mortem* examinations never reveal the action of a living cell."

The electric brain-wave recorders now being put to so many uses by medical researchers could probably even now give adequate substantiation to this theory, were scientists to test the electric emanations from the brain of a person before, during, and after his submission to hypnotism. And it may not be long before doctors will be able to *see* the actual effect of such practices on the living cells of the brain, judging from recent technological developments. The phase microscope (see Lookout for May) may be one step in this direction, and *Time* (May 31) notes the construction of an "improved" X-ray machine (though this is by no means harmless to the patients) which will give an image 500 times clearer than was before possible.

More on the "Truth Drug"

Writing in 1888, H. P. Blavatsky described the world as having "become a vast arena—a true valley of discord and of eternal strife—a necropolis wherein lie buried the highest and the most holy aspirations of our Spirit-Soul. That soul becomes with every new generation more paralyzed and atrophied." The uncontrolled use of hypnotism and truth-drugs is illustrative of her comment. In a radio newsreel broadcast in England, reference was made to the general point of view of doctors as to the undesirability of using the Truth Drug for purposes of police examination (see Lookout for April), although seeing no objections to it as a means of answering the purely medical question of whether a patient is shamming illness. The moral problem which arises, for instance, where a prisoner is given pentothal, and then finds an enterprising detective by his bedside after doctors have left, is undecided! And, as a warning to the legal profession, the commentator remarked that if every prisoner were known to be telling the truth, the need for lawyers might easily be diminished!

Sodium Pentothal in Legal Practice

The broadcast was made on the news that a Frenchman accused of working for the Gestapo at Toulouse during the war, was arrested some time ago and proceeded to give an extremely realistic display of loss of memory:

> The magistrate in charge of the case ordered a medical examination which was carried out by three doctors. The doctors used an injection of the drug or anaesthetic, pentothal, and the prisoner then admitted that he was faking his loss of memory. But the lawyer defending him protested vigorously against the use of the drug and the council which represents the Paris barristers is making an enquiry. Professor Donnedieu de Vabre, a distinguished lawyer who represented France on the tribunal at the Nuremburg trials, has said that the medical profession is entitled to use what he calls scientific treatment to discover whether or not somebody is imitating the symptoms of illness, but he bars the use of pentothal. His view is that it should be forbidden in legal inquiries, like hypnotism, and he describes it as "an attack on the human personality." (*The Listener,* Feb. 15, 1948.)

We have travelled far, in these modern contrivances, from the days of the early Gnostics who "claimed that their Science, the Gnosis,

ested on a square, the angles of which represented respectively *Sige* (Silence), *Bythos* (Depth), *Nous* (Spiritual Soul or Mind), and *Aletheia* (Truth)." (*S.D.* II, 573.)

Sobriety Serum

Sodium pentothal has made another "advance" from its position as truth serum. From Seattle, Washington, comes the report that it has been used "with considerable success" in treating the more difficult cases of alcoholism (Los Angeles *Times,* May 14). The report of this work (sponsored by the Research Foundation for Alcoholism) was given by Dr. Paul O'Hollaren, assistant chief of staff at Shadel Sanitarium. He stated that of 210 persons given the treatment, "60% were cured of alcoholism." The list of effects of the drug, as he disclosed them, makes significant reading, for it reflects the attitude which is used to justify all forms of drug and hypnotic therapy:

> 1—While the patient is under the influence of the drug he gives the doctors much information. This is used to help the person understand his problems and solve them.
>
> 2—At the same time, the drug makes the person talk freely. He feels better when he has the problems "off his chest."
>
> 3—The drug calms the person and this calm lasts for some time after its use. This helps the person to "get a grip on himself."
>
> 4—While under the influence of the drug, the person is often given suggestions to follow out in his waking hours. He does not remember these but they help him to act in a way to avoid tensions.

Not Brave, New World!

No matter how wonderful their effects may appear, it must be noted that drugs, like hypnosis, are but mechanisms of escape, even as is alcohol itself. In what significant way do these newer evasions differ from the opium "heaven" whose gates the law so scrupulously guards? And will not the time come when a treatment will have to be devised to take care of those who, from drink, have become addicted to hypnotic drugs? The inevitability of individual responsibility—the reality of Karma as a force inherent in the man—was thus suggested by Mr. Judge:

> Once *Manas* the Thinker has arrived on the scene he does not return to baser forms; first, because he does not wish to, and second,

> because he cannot. For just as the blood in the body is prevented by valves from rushing back and engorging the heart, so in this greater system of universal circulation the door is shut behind the Thinker and prevents his retrocession.

ANIMAL-MAN REFLEX

Any sense of continuing individuality—and what man does not have a forward-looking mind?—must eventually preclude a practice which is retrogressive for man:

> Dr. O'Hollaren said the treatment requires at least a year. It is used in connection with the well-known conditioned-reflex treatment. In this, the patient is made to become sick at the smell of alcohol.

Some form of restraint—perhaps even hypnosis—may seem justified in those cases where a disease or habit has for the time eaten away a man's effective will; but these steps are but stop-gaps, not remedies. To apply the word "cure" to the hypnotic establishment of an animal reflex in the mind of a *man,* attempts a kind of blasphemy on the human race. (For earlier Lookout discussions of hypnotism, see THEOSOPHY XXX, 85; XXXII, 91; XXXIV, 275; and XXXVI, 189, and 286.)

ARE DOCTORS "SCHIZOPHRENIC"?

It seems that medical science, basing itself on the Darwinian conception of man, encourages a very real though unconscious "split" in the persons of its practitioners. Dr. O'Hollaren is, of course, only typical of many doctors who are coming to rely on these forceful methods as "cures," but it may be asked, how did he obtain his ability to "solve" the problems of his patients? Certainly, no one is hypnotized into such a position of knowledge. And it may further be surmised that his reaction (*not* reflex) to a suggestion that *he* be hypnotized out of some objectionable habit would be decidedly in the negative.

"SHIFTING AND RESHIFTING"

The confused and propagandized public, it is true, does little to encourage medical men to respect its integrity. Too many are apparently quite ready to replace God with scientific supermen, and substitute for the theological idea of original sin the materialistic dogma that they can be pushed along the path of "right action" by having their conflicts, defects, or inhibitions wiped out

by surgery, drugs, or hypnosis. As H. P. Blavatsky wrote, the average man—

> is very little aware, taking as he does his scientific data on faith, that both premises and conclusions are generally the product of the same brains, which, however learned, are not infallible; a truism demonstrated daily by the shifting and re-shifting of scientific theories and speculations. (*S.D.* II, 438.)

Medical history itself provides the careful reader with all too many illustrations of the truth of this statement in the records of the fatalities which have often accompanied the over-confident empiricism of some of its experimenters. But of late it would appear that medicine had entered its Kali Yuga in more ways than one, for in shorter and shorter compass are being enacted the by-now-familiar sequences in the medical drama—the great "cure" discovered and then the gruesome disillusionment as it reveals its prejudicial nature, often at the cost of many lives.

Second Thoughts

There are, for instance, men of undeniable scientific education who refuse to lend the sanction of their names to the excesses of prematurely popularized techniques. Dr. Robert P. Knight, addressing the American Psychopathological Association, condemned as pernicious what he called the "strong-arm therapeutic attitude that the patient's illness must be beaten out of him." (New York *Times,* June 5.) Dr. Knight, formerly chief of staff of the Menninger Clinic, Topeka, Kan., is medical director of the Austen Riggs Foundation which maintains a voluntary hospital and clinic for the study and treatment of psycho-neuroses and training of psychiatrists at Stockbridge, Mass.

> The indiscriminate use of "strong-arm" methods of psychotherapy such as electro-shock, injections of sodium amytol and lobotomy were attacked. . . . [Dr. Knight] also included the practice of "intimidating psychoanalysis."
>
> He declared that he wanted to make it clear that he was not condemning the use of these therapies as a whole because "each one has its place and purpose."
>
> "But because some of these therapies gain support in certain types of cases and because they can be learned without too long a period of training, they come to be focused on as the chief therapeutic method of many men." . . .

WHOM SHALL WE BELIEVE?

The aptness of Dr. Knight's adjective, "strong-arm," to describe these methods of therapy is unintentionally borne out by the remarks of Dr. Gosta Rylander, associate professor of psychiatry at the Royal Caroline Institute, Stockholm. Dr. Rylander, we are told, has had three years' experience (with 300 cases) in the technique of frontal lobotomy. A report of his speech, delivered before the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease, was given by the New York *Herald Tribune* (Dec. 14, 1947):

> The operation interrupts pathways between the frontal lobe, or forepart, of the brain, which controls personality, reasoning and imagination, and other brain centers where these powers are converted into action. . . . The value and yet the danger of the treatment was emphasized by the psychiatrist, who said patients come out of the operation with a changed personality. These changes neutralize the obsessions when the operation is properly done, but if the patient has not been carefully studied beforehand, he may be more twisted mentally than ever, after the operation.

"In general," Dr. Rylander explained, "the operation is done to turn depressed, introverted patients into healthy, extroverted easygoing persons."

Dr. Rylander may have emphasized the "danger" as well as the "value" of this operation, but Dr. Walter Freeman, making the first comprehensive report on the method to the American Psychiatric Association (Los Angeles *Times*, May 20), after personal experience with only thirty cases, appears to have done no such thing. Describing transorbital lobotomy as "a 10-minute brain operation, in which an instrument resembling an ice pick is gently driven into the brain above the eye," Dr. Freeman says that the operation is "simple, quick and safe."

"BARBARIC SURGERY"

Over against the easy confidence of the followers of the medical fashion of nerve-cutting may be placed a statement from Dr. Leo M. Davidoff of Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons. Dr. Davidoff does very few lobotomies, and warns his patients: "Although surgery is sometimes necessary, it is a barbaric

form of therapy." A supporting opinion comes from Dr. Winfred Overholser, chief of St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C.:

> The operation is very much overdone. It is even done on young people who have had no opportunity to try other forms of therapy. I look upon it as a mutilating operation. It puts out of commission the part of the brain that separates man from the higher anthropoids. (*Time,* June 30, 1947.)

It may be a long way, as time moves, from the theory of the ape-origin of man to the cutting of nerves in the brain, but ideologically the connection is not particularly remote. The student of Theosophy, realizing that false philosophy has practical dangers, even though these may not manifest for a generation or two, has every incentive for concentrating on the promulgation of true ideas respecting nature and man so that the medicine of the future will evolve into a wholly natural science.

Amendment on Religious Freedom

Joseph R. Bryson, a Congressman from South Carolina, has introduced in Congress a proposed amendment to the Constitution, providing "that neither Congress nor any of the several states shall aid any educational institution wholly or in part under sectarian control." This Amendment, Mr. Bryson explains, "would prohibit Congress or any of the states from furnishing free transportation or free textbooks or other educational supplies, or from otherwise defraying any expenses, for any person attending a sectarian educational institution." In the *Christian Century* for June 30, Mr. Bryson reviews the Supreme Court decisions touching on religious liberty, beginning with the Pierce case in 1925, in which the court ruled that a compulsory education law is complied with when parents send a child to a private or sectarian school. This is consistent with the principle of religious freedom, he points out, but "in the free textbook and free transportation cases, the guarantee of the first amendment has received deadly blows." These cases are the Louisiana school-book case in 1929 and the Everson case (1947).

"The Astonishing Thing"

Mr. Bryson quotes from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* an editorial comment on the fact that 16 out of 48 states now provide for transportation assistance to parochial schools. The *Post-Dispatch* ob-

served: "The astonishing thing is that after so many years of sturdy and jealously guarded independence, religion is now considered so feeble as to need government help," Mr. Bryson, himself a Baptist, is firm in his recommendation that the "wall of separation" between Church and State be kept intact.

Mr. Bryson finds a strange contradiction between the Everson and McCollum decisions:

> It is difficult to reconcile the Supreme Court's decision in the Everson case with its subsequent decision in the McCollum case, in which it ruled out released time for religious instruction in public schools. In the Everson case, expenditure of public funds for sectarian education was involved, while in the McCollum case there was no question of the use of public funds. Here is a paradox. The wall between religion and the state is thus made higher and more impregnable than the wall between the Roman Catholic Church and the state.

"A Thoroughfare of Infiltration"

This circumstance, in Mr. Bryson's opinion, gives Protestants more reason to "cheer than to fear the Supreme Court decision in the McCollum case." But the Protestant influence must be more and more positive on the side of "freedom of thought and freedom of conscience—two principles which lie at the very base of all religious freedoms." Mr. Bryson points to a straight and narrow path:

> Whatever benefits Protestant Christianity expects to derive from attempting to promulgate its faith on public school time and with public school facilities are offset by the fact that it is thus widening the breach in the wall that separates church from state. A wall with a breach is not a wall at all; it is a thoroughfare of infiltration. The smallest breach which Protestants make in that wall works chiefly to the advantage of the Roman Catholic Church in its efforts to draw on the public treasury. Protestants must be content to ignore the potentialities of the public schools as an avenue of religious instruction, for they cannot do otherwise without compromising their own position in the matter of public school funds for transportation of parochial school pupils.

Previous Lookout discussion of religion in the schools will be found in the issues of March and May, 1947. The general problem, with respect to the McCollum decision, is the subject of "Studies in Karma" in this issue.

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